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the singing sands could be transported from the beach and placed in a perforated vessel, box or barrel, on dune or in blowout and left to be subjected to the action of rain for a considerable period of time, or some of the singing sands could be subjected to a tumbling action by rotating as in a laboratory rotating tumbler. After this some sand could be subjected to the leaching action of distilled water saturated with  $\text{CO}_2$ . For a third experiment, some of the dune or blowout sand could be wetted several times with lake water and subjected to a drying action between the wettings. Suitable sound tests should, of course, be made at the proper times.

These experiments should be performed by some one residing by the lake shore either permanently or during the summer so that advantage could be taken of changing weather conditions and rainstorms.

W. D. RICHARDSON

### SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

#### THE HOUSE OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

THE original house and laboratory of Dr. Joseph Priestley, the great chemist who discovered oxygen in 1774, and came twenty years later to America, which is located on the banks of the Susquehanna river, at Northumberland, Pa., was purchased recently by graduate students of the Pennsylvania State College, who plan to move it to the campus and make it a lasting memorial.

Upon learning that the Priestley homestead, which was built in 1794-1796, was to be put up at public auction, the Penn State chemists sent as their representative to the sale Dr. G. G. Pond, dean of the School of Natural Science at the college. He was successful in making the purchase, and the historic mansion will be preserved.

Architects from the college will at once make the necessary surveys preparatory to the work of moving the Priestley house to the campus at State College. The house is of frame, and painting has kept the woodwork in a remarkable state of preservation, so that it may be possible to rebuild the greater part of the structure from the present lumber. Im-

mense pine timbers used in the framework are as good as new and the old-fashioned interior decorations—arched doorways, fireplaces and stairway—are in such condition that they can be removed and replaced with comparative ease.

While the purchase of the house has been made by Dr. Pond for the Penn State chemistry alumni, who are scattered to all parts of the country, funds for its removal and erection on the college campus will be supplied by an as yet unnamed donor. Actual work of removal will probably be started in the spring. Northumberland is about sixty miles from State College, at the intersection of the north and west branches of the Susquehanna.

The reconstruction on the college campus will be along the old architectural lines, but modernized and adapted to some suitable use by the school of Natural Science, according to present plans. The house is an old landmark in Northumberland county, and can be seen on the outskirts of the town from trains on the Pennsylvania Railroad passing Northumberland. It is a two-story structure, with capacious attic space. It is about  $45 \times 50$  feet, with a projection at each end about 25 feet square. One of these was the kitchen and the other the workshop, or laboratory, in which Priestley pursued his scientific study and experiments.

#### CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS

THE United States Civil Service Commission announces the following examination:

On December 23 for meteorologist (men only). Vacancies in the Signal Service at large of the War Department throughout the United States, at salaries from \$1,600 to \$3,000, and in positions requiring similar qualifications, will be filled from this examination. The entrance salary will depend upon the qualifications of the appointee. The duties of appointees will consist of the making, computing and recording of meteorological observations in connection with the meteorological service of the U. S. Army; also the instruction of enlisted men in such work. Competitors will not be required to report for examination at any place, but will be rated on